



## Rural Farmers Market Capital Development Grant Program Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program

### Application Guidelines - Fiscal Year 2012-2013

#### A. General Information:

The purpose of the TAEP Rural Farmers Market Capital Development Grant Program is to increase **income to Tennessee farmers by providing assistance for the construction of a structure for a farmers market** in communities throughout Tennessee. Farmers markets provide excellent venues for the sale of locally grown, farm fresh products to consumers.

- **Grants are available to qualified Farmers Markets in amounts up to \$50,000.**
- **Funding is limited and grant requests are competitive.**

Funding for this program is provided by the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP) and supported by the following partners.

- Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development
- Tennessee Department of Tourist Development
- USDA Rural Resources

#### Program Timeline

<b>Application Deadline:</b>	<b>February 15, 2013</b>
<b>Approval Announcement:</b>	<b>March 15, 2013</b>
<b>Project Deadline:</b>	<b>March 15, 2015</b>

#### B. Eligibility Requirements:

1. Grant funds are available to **publicly owned and operated farmers markets** for **the construction of a structure for a farmers market or improvements to an existing farmers market structure.**
2. Grants must be issued through **public entities** such as a city or county government, local Chamber of Commerce, etc.

*Grants are not available for private individuals, businesses or organizations.*

3. Applications must be postmarked no later than **February 15, 2013.**
4. Projects must be completed and invoices submitted no later than **March 15, 2015.**

5. Activities must meet all state and local building, food safety, regulatory, and ADA requirements.
6. Grant must demonstrate strong contribution of 20%, which may include funding or land.
7. Must already be an established farmers market in a rural area as defined by USDA Rural Development below.

**Rural area is defined as any area other than:**

- (1) A city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants; and**
- (2) The urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a city or town.**

8. Must be a member of the Farmers Market Association and attend the Farmers Market Conference at the Tennessee Horticulture Expo (2013, 2014, or 2015).
9. Applications must have letter of support from the County Extension Agent.

**C. Application Process:**

1. Complete and submit **Rural Farmers Market Capital Development Grant Application** by the postmark deadline of **February 15, 2013**. Applications are available through the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Market Development office at (615) 837-5346 or via e-mail at Jan.Keyser@tn.gov.

2. The application will be evaluated and ranked by a staff committee and the applicant will be notified in writing of their approval or disapproval for grant assistance. **Only projects that are approved in advance by the committee will be eligible for grant assistance.** Approved projects must be completed and invoices submitted by the project deadline.

**D. Application Evaluation Criteria:**

**Only applications that are complete and include sufficient information will be considered for evaluation.**

Important considerations will be the overall soundness of the proposed activity's goals, objectives, local commitment, project management and work plan. As part of the evaluation process, a meeting with the applicant and/or a visit to the applicant's enterprise may be required. Proposal questions include the following:

1. Describe your organization.
  - a. Year established
  - b. Management overview (dedicated manager or management team, farmers' advisory committee or board of directors with significant Tennessee farmer participation)
  - c. Organizational goals
  - d. Describe how your market is promoted (advertising, events, outreach, website)

- e. Describe the current facilities of your farmers market (structures, parking, restrooms, flooring, climate control, handicap accessibility, permanent signage)
  - f. What is your market's plan for ensuring that farmers sell Tennessee grown produce?
2. Have you applied for funding through Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, or USDA Rural Development, previously?
- a. Program name:
  - b. Fiscal year(s)
  - c. Brief description of project(s)
  - d. Amount approved
  - e. Amount paid
  - f. Results of past project(s)
3. Describe your proposed project(s).
- a. List each proposed project individually.
  - b. Indicate how the project(s) will benefit your market's vendors and help increase their farm income.
  - c. Who will oversee the management of this project to see that it will be completed?
  - d. Please provide a layout of this project.
4. Outline the steps and time frame for completing your proposed project. \*Projects and reimbursement paperwork must be completed by **March 15, 2015**.
5. Provide a **detailed, line-item budget** for each proposed activity. Indicate which items will be involved in grant funding. Include written cost estimates from vendor or source of quote.
6. Demonstrate 20% match. Indicate type of match (federal, state, local or private financial cash participation). Certain in-kind expenses may be accepted if they are directly used in the construction or expansion of the market. Provide supporting documents and financial commitment letters from all funding sources involved in the projects.

**E. The Committee reserves the right to:**

- 1. Consider each funding request on a case by case basis
- 2. Reject any or all requests
- 3. Provide partial funding for specific activity components that may be less than the full amount requested
- 4. Provide funding contingent on receiving additional information or testimony from the applicant
- 5. Waive or modify minor irregularities in requests
- 6. Require the applicant to work with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to complete all aspects of the application and reporting requirements

**F. Contract Process:**

1. A Grant Contract will be issued by TDA for each approved application. Funding is not considered approved until the applicant receives an approval letter and a fully executed copy of this signed contract. The Grantee will be required to submit various information including Substitute W-9 and ACH (Automated Clearing House) forms.

2. **Any changes to the executed contract**, including changes to the approved budget, must be approved in advance and in writing by TDA.

3. The staff of TDA will monitor and evaluate each funded activity. TDA reserves the right to make site visits relating to the performance of the activity during and following completion.

**G. Reporting Requirements:**

Following the completion of the approved grant activity, the applicant will complete a **Project Summary** and return it to TDA. The format of this report will be specified by TDA. This report must include:

1. Project Report
  - a. Brief description of the completed activity and its objectives
  - b. Financial impact of activity to farm income and the community
  - c. Other benefits of the activity
2. Documentation (if applicable)
  - a. Receipts of actual expenses as outlined in activity budget
  - b. Photographs of activities, equipment or facilities, built, purchased and/or installed
  - c. Copies of marketing materials prepared and/or purchased
3. Forms
  - a. Invoice for actual amount of reimbursement based on amount authorized
  - b. The invoice must clearly relate expenditures to corresponding approved items in the application
4. Quarterly report on progress

**H. Payments:**

Following review of the materials submitted, and if no additional information or site visits are required, the committee will process payment to the applicant.

**I. Contact Information:**

Please direct any questions concerning this program to:

Jan Keyser, TAEP Specialist  
Tennessee Department of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 40627, Holeman Building  
Nashville, TN 37204  
(615) 837-5346  
Jan.Keyser@tn.gov